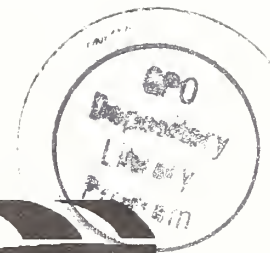


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Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture

Office of Communications

Washington, DC 20250-1340

Letter No. 2660

April 29, 1994

ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATION -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy has created the Agricultural Council on Environmental Quality. The council will promote coordination in resolving environmental problems and developing environmental policy, and serve as the focal point for USDA interaction for environmental issues with other Departments, agencies, environmental groups and the agricultural community. The council membership includes USDA assistant and under secretaries whose responsibilities include programs charged with environmental protection. **Carole Florman (202) 720-7173.**

SOYBEAN OIL RECORD -- U.S. consumption of soybean oil in 1993/94 is expected to reach 13.2 billion pounds, an all-time record. Use of soybean oil in baking and frying has led the expansion. Oil production this year is expected to hit 13.6 billion pounds. The oil extraction rate is 10.86 pounds per bushel. Tight domestic supplies of vegetable oils have swelled soybean and competing oil imports this year, mostly from Canada. South American producers are expecting a record-setting crop, offering brisk competition. U.S. soybean exports have been adjusted downward to 590 million bushels, nearly 25% less than in 1992/93. **Contact: Mark Ash (202) 219-0840.**

SUNFLOWER ACRES -- U.S. farmers indicate that they plan to plant 3.24 million acres to sunflowers this year, up nearly 17 percent from a year ago. About 80 percent will be oil-type sunflowers, and 20 percent confectionary. The sunflower acreage for confectionary use is 21 percent higher than year ago figures. If the oil-type acreage is realized it will be the highest on record. Behind the increase is historically high sunflower prices, a very tight stock situation, and high early season contract prices. As a result, sunflower plantings appear more attractive relative to wheat and barley. **Contact: George Douvelis (202) 219-0840.**

PEANUT PLANTINGS -- Peanut growers intend to plant 1.6 million acres this year, 4 percent below last season. But growers in Oklahoma and New Mexico indicated that they intend to increase plantings about 5 percent above last year's plantings. The largest acreage is in the southeast at 1 million acres, down about 4 percent. USDA's next report on peanut acreage will be released on June 30. Prospects for U.S. peanut exports are down. Larger crops in India, China, and an expected larger crop in Argentina, are reducing U.S. peanut export potential. **Scott Sanford (202) 219-0840.**

DAIRY -- Farm milk prices may post some recovery this autumn. Prices in 1994 are projected to average slightly above 1993 for the whole year. Retail dairy prices will rise in the coming months, finishing the year at 2-3 percent above 1993 figures. During the remainder of this year declines in milk cow numbers are expected to ease while milk per cow increases. For the year, cow numbers are expected to average about 2 percent below 1993. **Contact: James Miller (202) 219-0770.**

COTTON ACREAGE -- The significant rally in cotton prices since December may lead to more upland cotton produced outside the government program. Producers intend to plant nearly 14 million acres this year. Upland acreage will increase 409,000 acres from a year ago despite an increase in the 1994 acreage reduction program requirement. Under the cotton program producers are required to idle 11 percent of the upland cotton base to be eligible for program benefits this season. Weak prices for extra long staple cotton have likely affected acreage, expected to be down 7 percent from last year and the lowest since 1987. **Contact: Robert Skinner (202) 219-0841.**

BOLLWEEVIL BAIT TUBE -- USDA scientists and 20 cotton growers are testing a new bait tube to determine if it can replace insecticide sprays on all 8,000 acres planted to cotton in Noxubee County, Mississippi. The bait tube, now on the market, uses only five to ten percent as much insecticide as typical sprays. Placed about 100 feet apart around the perimeter of a field, boll weevils are lured to a thin insecticide coating on the tube by a synthetic version of the pest's own sex attractant, or pheromone. The tubes don't attract beneficial insects, and are a safe alternative to spraying near environmentally sensitive areas. In earlier tests the bait tubes reduced spring emergence of weevils by more than 90 percent. The cotton acreage in Noxubee County, Mississippi is isolated from other cotton-growing areas, reducing migration of weevils during the season and helping scientists get more precise information on the tube's effectiveness. If the test succeeds it could serve as a model for use in an eradication program in other cotton-growing areas. **Contact: Gerald McKibben (601) 323-2230.**

BLACK FLY CONTROL -- Black flies can cause millions in economic damage when they emerge from rivers and streams to attack farm animals. Pestered by the flies calves may lose weight, and during the cattle breeding season the calf crop may decrease 40 percent. Papermills are also interested in reducing black fly numbers because the flies find their way into paper-making machines. Bodies of the flies leave black specks on paper, and can ruin paper worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. Scientists have tested a bacterial organism that is placed on water which kills black fly larvae but is harmless to all mammals, fish, and adult insects. *Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis* was applied to 42 miles of the Sulphur River in Texas and achieved nearly 100 percent control at a cost of \$20,000. **Contact James Robinson (903) 834-6191.**

ISABELA IS BURNING -- USDA's Forest Service has sent two fire managers to the Galapagos Islands, off the western shore of Ecuador, South America. They are assessing the serious wildland fire that is burning out of control. The fire, on the island of Isabela, may threaten native, high-value wildlife and plant communities. The Forest Service is working in tandem with the Ecuadorian government, the Charles Darwin Foundation, U.S. AID, and other organizations to control the fire. **Contact: Carole Florman (202) 720-7173.**

PUTTING VITAMIN A IN THE DIET -- Vitamin A helps to keep skin smooth and clear, and is needed for normal growth. Good sources of vitamin A include liver, milk, and green or yellow vegetables such as spinach, broccoli, carrots, sweet potatoes and cantaloupe. **Contact: Dan Rahn (912) 681-5189.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1925 -- John Snyder reports on the future for one of the fastest growing areas of farming, aquaculture. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME #1406 -- Food safety reforms proposed; playing safe with eggs; mosquito munchers; vitamin C and cholesterol; a recycled house. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE FEATURES #1917 -- Crops at risk?; rangeland reform proposals; pesticide reform proposed; yellow flowered alfalfa; screwworm "fatal attraction"; dairy update; rice update. (Weekly reel of features.)

NOTE THE FOLLOWING CHANGE

Beginning in May major crop reports will be released at 8:30 AM. On crop report days USDA Radio will produce stories on the production and supply/demand reports and have them available on the Radio Newslines at 10:30 AM Eastern Time. Cotton and citrus reports will be released at 3:00 PM and those stories plus other information will be available on the 5:00 PM Newslines, along with a repeat of the information offered at 10:30 that day.

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE -- Tuesday, May 10, at 10:30 AM, crop production report, world ag supply and demand, at 5:00 PM a repeat of 10:30 feed plus: citrus update, cotton, crop and weather update. Wednesday, May 11, cattle and sheep outlook, poultry outlook, world grain situation, world cotton situation, world oilseed situation; Friday, May 13, milk production; Tuesday, May 17, crop & weather update, farm labor. These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newslines carry many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.

USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359
COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545
Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on non-destructive testing of wood; Pat O'Leary reports on searching for vitamin A; and Pat examines clutter stress.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA meteorologist Bob Stefanski on weather and crops; USDA economist James Miller on the dairy outlook.

Available on Satellite Galaxy 4, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT; Saturdays 10:00 a.m., EDT; Mondays 8:00 a.m., EDT.

OFFMIKE

LAKES...in central Minnesota contained ice, but planting was underway anyway, says **Earl Hunter** (WKTY, La Crosse, WI). Mid-April soil temperatures were warm enough to put seed in the ground. Adequate rain in Earl's area is keeping soil moisture in excellent condition.

BIG INCREASE...in pork production during the last year and a half has moved North Carolina from 7th to 2nd place nationwide, says **Johnnie Hood** (Southern Farm Network, Raleigh, NC). Corporate hog production is behind the advance. Iowa is the nation's #1 hog producer. Johnnie says April has been a dry month, the soil is beginning to crack open. Its not an emergency situation yet, but he notes there is no rain in the forecast.

DECEASED...**Wally Ausley** (WPTF, Raleigh, NC, retired). Wally moved to Holden Beach, became active in local politics and was elected mayor. Wally died in office. Thanks to **Johnnie Hood** for the information.

Farm Broadcasters Letter



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Room 528A
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CITY KIDS...learned about livestock and farm life in a Farm Fair, says **Kevin Morse** (WOC, Davenport, IA). Sponsored by the Scott County Farm Bureau and covered by the station, 650 students at an elementary school saw and touched hogs, sheep, rabbits, chickens, goats and cows brought to the school by local producers. Inside the school the children moved from session to session visiting those who work and live on farms, and learning about the crops that farmers produce. Kevin says feedback was positive, and the effort a good example of the farm community reaching out to educate kids about farm life.

MOVED...**Carey Martin**, from KVOO Tulsa, OK, to Oklahoma Agrinet, Oklahoma City as associate farm editor at the network.

CONGRATULATIONS...to **Sally & Ed Kuhn** on the birth of their baby boy, **Paul Edward Kuhn**. Sally is the former farm director at the University of Wisconsin's WRFW, River Falls, and now an ag education instructor. Thanks to **Sue Marson** (WRFW) for the information.

VIC POWELL
Office of Communications